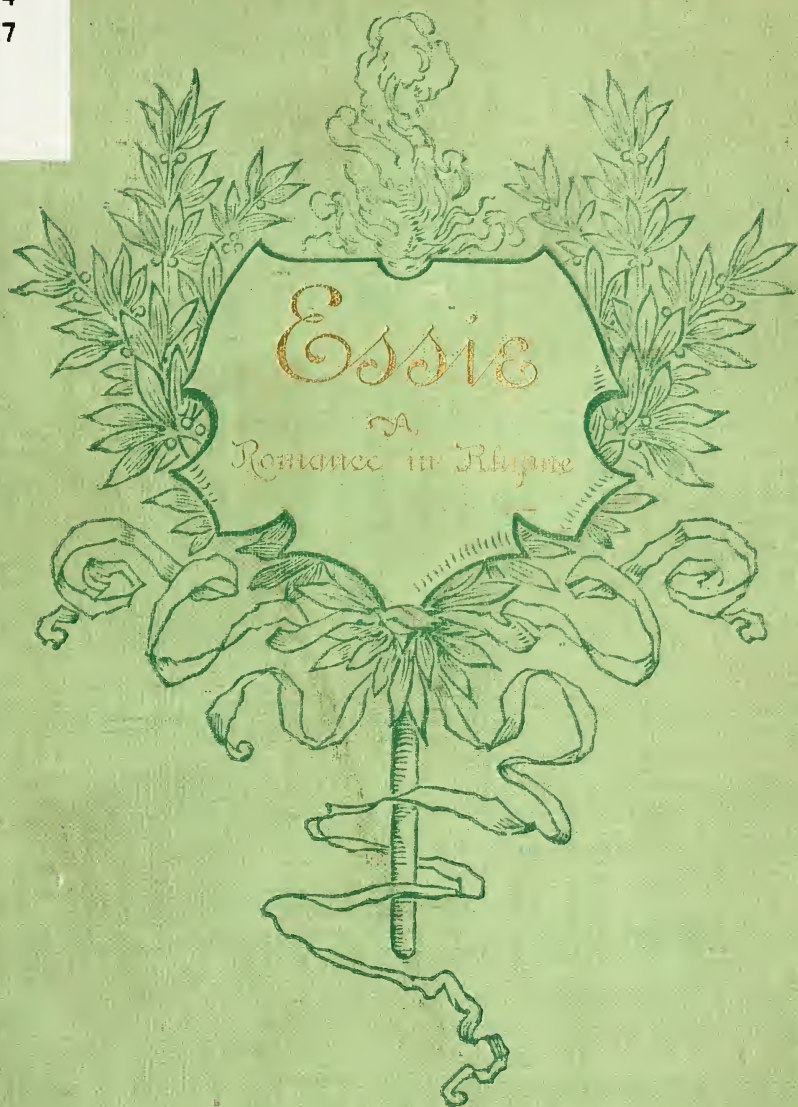


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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.















# ESSIE

A ROMANCE IN RHYME

BY

LAURA DAYTON FESSENDEN

*ILLUSTRATED BY J. H. VANDERPOEL*



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LEE AND SHEPARD PUBLISHERS  
10 MILK STREET  
BOSTON

PS 146A  
719  
1895

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ESSIE

12-32164

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# ESSIE

## PRELUDE

"It's a horrid bore," quoth my lady, "but I  
see nothing else to do.

They were very kind to Laurence," and here  
my lady drew

Her Point d'Alençon *mouchoir*, and wiped a tear  
or so

From her ruddy cheek (a tribute to her boy,  
dead long ago).

"Well, do as you like, my lady," says my lord  
from behind the *News*.

"Invitations I don't interfere with, so, my lady,  
do just as you choose."





## THE INVITATION

MY DEAR MISS BRUCE. — We are nearing your annual holiday;

I presume it is rather stupid when your school-mates are away!

Do you think a trip to England your pleasure would enhance?

If yes, make your preparations for leaving *la belle France*.

I have in my home no daughters to help make time pass away

(Only Sir Charles and myself, dear), so I fear 'twill be far from gay:

And McPherson (my son) is making, if I rightly understand,

An arrangement with a stag party to summer in Switzerland.

Another thing : we have decided not to open  
our house in town,  
So I fear the attractions I offer are not of a  
kind to crown  
A young girl's cup with pleasure. Still, dear,  
if you'd like to come,



And see the old house that Laurence told you  
of as "his home,"  
And see the mother that loved him (and misses  
him day by day),  
You will find a kindly welcome,  
From your friend,  
MARY LANGLEY.

## THE ACCEPTANCE

MY DEAR LADY LANGLEY. — I'm sitting in the  
horriddest chatter and din  
Of at least five nations of school-girls; so it's  
rather hard to begin,  
To tell you how glad I am to leave this *la belle*  
*France*.  
(If I'd been invited to Hades, last summer, I'd  
*jumped at the chance*.)  
I had to show my guardian your letter that  
asked me to come.  
He's an American fossil, that used to live near  
us at home;  
But, from being for years in Paris, he's grown  
to adopt their way  
Of guarding wards and daughters, which, really,  
I must say,  
To a girl of republican spirit, is just a regular  
cross;  
For (to use a coined word of my country) each  
girl is about her own "boss"

In the land of the "Star-Spangled Banner," in  
that dear land of the free,  
So I just *detest* Mr. Jenkins, and his *Frenching*  
it over me.  
So when old Guardy Jenkins, in one eyeglass,  
tried to look wise,  
And began a long string of questions, I felt  
my very hair rise,  
And I said, "Look here, Mr. Jenkins, I'll just  
have you to know.  
If you *shrug* and talk till you're *black in the*  
*face*, all the very same, *I shall go!*"  
He gave in at once (per usual), he bade Madam  
"to prepare  
Mademoiselle for a journey to England — Ma-  
demoiselle would summer there."  
I am glad that you have no daughters. — girls  
always end with a row  
Over some soft thing or other, one can't tell  
why, or how;  
Then I'm glad your son's in the mountains, for  
I'm only just sixteen,  
And men have a fashion of thinking a girl of  
that age rather "green;"  
As for being out of a city, I've precious too  
much of *that* here;



And your proper London acquaintances would  
style me horrid and queer;

And then, my dear Lady Langley, it will be so  
sweet to know

I am treading the very pathways that Laurence  
trod long ago.

I was very fond of your Laurence; I liked his  
odd, foreign way;

And used to sit beside his bed in preference  
to play.

For you know, my Lady Langley, that Laurence  
was poor and ill;

And even now, in looking back, my eyes begin  
to fill.

From the first he seemed fond of Essie — Essie,  
my lady, is *me*.

I don't know how it happened — I was wild as  
I could be.

Mamma died when I was a baby, and so (though  
papa was refined)

I grew up wilful and slangy, and never was  
known to mind.

The doctor said 'twas consumption; that Laurence  
would have to go

Away from us, up to heaven, before the winter's  
snow.

Laurence was not sad at the summons; and once, when I was near

(I always was near him some way), he called to me, "Essie, dear!

Are your tasks for the day all finished?"

"Yes," I said, "and what then?"



"Come and sit down beside me, and bring your paper and pen.

I want you to write me a letter; and, Essie,

I want it to be

(Until I die), little Essie, a secret between you and me;

‘Twill not be long, wee lassie (and I shall be glad to die).”

So I sobbed him out a promise, but he bade me “not to cry.”

Well, I wrote the letter, my lady, how you read it, I can’t think, I’m sure,

For I had no idea of spelling; punctuation I could not endure;

But I wrote his words, my lady, and I’m sorry now to state,

That I just absolutely abhorred you, with the hatingest kind of hate.

What if poor dear Laurence had been wilful and wild,

It seemed so very unnatural that a mother should see her child

Turned in shame from the roof-tree, with a father’s curse on his head.

Your husband seemed a monster; but Laurence always said. —

“Essie, I richly deserved it, I was wilful and bad;

I know my wayward spirit has made my lady’s life sad.”

You know how he asked “forgiveness” — that “kind memories you would keep

Of your youngest boy — your Laurence — who  
soon would be asleep."

So glad to rest in quiet, after life's short day,  
But what's the use of recalling when I only  
want to say,

That I'm glad you forgave him, — glad that  
Laurence rests

With the turf of old England above him — the  
land he loved the best.

And as to our kindness, my lady, we Ameri-  
cans have a way

Of being a generous nation; of being apt to  
say

To a stranger that asks our protection, a "yea,"  
and not a "nay."

But enough of all this. I'll be with you ere  
the close of the week;

And, my lady, I really intend to be docile and  
gentle and meek.

I hope your son's in the mountains, or, if not,  
that we shall cry truce.

Believe me, my lady, I'm ever,

Your little friend,

ESSIE C. BRUCE.

## ESSIE'S FIRST HOME LETTER

DEAR CHICKEN, — I've crossed the Channell,  
and reached the old English shore  
(Every time I get on the ocean I'm sicker than  
ever before).

Old Guardy was true to the last; and stuck  
to me like a burr,

And the lectures and cautions he gave, will not  
in the least deter

Me from doing just as I like. Can a leopard  
change his spots?

"No, he can't." Well, do you suppose *his* talk-  
ing would change me lots?

I said, why shouldn't "they stare;" I'm *very*  
pretty, grandpa,

You can't deny that; for they say, "I am like  
poor mamma;"

And that *she* was a belle in her youth, and  
*you* were her beau,

Till Dr. Bruce came and cut you out, so you  
can't be surprised, you know;

But in my heart, dear Charley, I felt a little  
bit queer,  
A flutter of expectation, and a tiny bit of fear.  
At the steamer's dock there met me, the steward,  
a Mr. Ray,  
He had come that morning from Leighcroft —  
all the way;  
And his manner was so respectful that I began  
to see,  
That if Guardy was provoking, he knew what  
ought to be.  
So I vowed I'd be calm as a duchess, and  
that, all the way by train,  
I would sit like a small stone image, and gaze  
out on the pelting rain.  
But my legs got awfully cramped. (I had  
skipped my dull novel through),  
And so I looked about me, as the next best  
thing to do.  
Mr. Ray was respectfully napping, screened by  
the morning *Times* ;  
His snores were so funny and muffled, they  
made me think of the chimes  
On our village church at home. Chick, I don't  
have need to tell  
What I did, for you know I giggled — girls  
always do, and — well,



"I vowed I'd be calm as a duchess"





I could not very well help it, my eyes *would*  
take a look

At the others in our compartment, and there sat  
a man with a book.

I thought at first he was reading, but now I  
know that he,

With very much more interest, was calmly watch-  
ing me.

“*Ce monde est plein de fous,*” I’ve heard our  
madam say.

I wonder if that fellow, Chick, expected me  
to pay

Him back the laughing glances, such as he seemed  
inclined to bestow?

Chick, it *could* have been a flirtation (it was hard  
to let it go).

(But I did.) I gave back one vacant stare, then  
turned my head away,

And *kept it turned* (though my poor neck ached),  
till I heard the porter say,

“All off for Leighcroft Manor!” I saw through  
the door disappear

The heels of my would-be flirtation (I wonder  
if he lives here).

My dear, the carriage that met me was just a  
family ark,

And I really believe the servants expected a real,  
live, stark,  
Staring, wild American Indian, with feathers,  
war-whoop, and all;  
For, at sight of me their looks darkened, *I wasn't*  
*the thing at all* ;  
A miss in a Paris bonnet, en pannier, en high-  
heeled shoes,  
Instead of a sooty savage in war-paint or with  
a papoose.  
But servants are well trained in England, so  
they opened the old ark door,  
O Chick, such *snifty* cushions I never lounged  
in before !  
Ray did not get in : he simply closed the door  
and stalked away,  
And hastened to tell (I doubt not) the buxom  
Mistress Ray  
And a host of red-cheeked daughters "that the  
importation had come ;"  
To call me a little " pipe-stem," and " thank  
heaven the girls at home  
Had not putty faces and Chinese feet," and fifty  
other compliments,  
That I won't take time to repeat. On we dashed  
through the twilight —



"Stood a gentle-looking lady."



The village faded away — and there dawned upon  
my sight  
The Manor; it stood upon a hillside, with ter-  
raced lawns before,  
And, like some grand old picture, before the  
open door  
Stood a gentle-looking lady, clad in soft robes  
of gray :  
One glance in her face, and fears, Chick, fled  
on swift wings away.  
By her side was a portly gentleman (he and  
Guardy would make a pair),  
Very fat and comfortable-looking, without any  
stock of hair :  
He hurried as fast as he could, and held out  
one puffy hand,  
While he said in a *winey* whisper, “ Welcome,  
dear, to England.”  
And then my lady caught me, and held me  
against her breast ;  
I looked at her through a mist, Chick, and felt  
more perfect rest  
Than I have for two long years, since father’s  
last kiss lay  
On my trembling, trembling lips, on the day I  
sailed away.

It wasn't a bit like the stories (why will novelists lie?)

My lady was just a woman, and she let me have my cry

Out on her motherly bosom. Then she kissed me, and said, —

“There, there, you are tired, dearie; cease crying, you'll make your eyes red.”

Well, we had tea together, my lord, my lady, and I,

With no one but ourselves and a white-haired butler by.

Then we sat and talked of Laurence till the great clock struck nine,

When my lady said, “Are you ready for bed?”

Be sure, dear, I did not decline.

Dear Charley, I'm awfully sleepy, but my room is very *swell*;

I wish it was not, I tell you, for it's rather frightful to dwell

With four huge life-sized pictures of some long gone ladies gay;

I can fancy them stepping down from their frames when the lights are taken away.

The bed is plump and fat and high, but yet I haven't a doubt

Every one of those four up yonder had on it  
their "laying out."

But heavens! I'm getting the shivers, and I'll  
frighten myself to death,

So, Chicken, I'm yours forever,

Your sister,

ESSIE, saith.



## McPHERSON TO HIS FRIEND

DEAR PHILIP, — The fates were against me. I  
would not be able to say  
What I said, and what I did not, when I knocked  
into our man, Ray,  
And learned 'twas his charming mission to bring  
out *la petite squaw*  
To summer at Leighcroft Manor. By thunder,  
Phil, what a bore !  
I am sure my lord will endure tortures far worse  
than his gout :  
I thank heaven for Switzerland's journey, so that  
*I* am counted out.  
But, as I said, luck was against me ; for, I would  
have you know,  
I had telegraphed my valet to send on word  
to Legrow  
That I'd take the noon train for Leighcroft, and  
arrange with him then and there  
For that sorrel colt — you know her? sired by  
“ Young Golden Hair.



No time to lose, for Bronson was hard upon my track,

So I was booked and done for, and could not well turn back.

So I cornered Ray, and told him about my little fix,

Bade him not to heed me, nor let the little minx

Know I was son of my mother — no recognition to make :

But, by George ! we got seats in the very same car. I donned my wide-awake,

And when the train got in motion, I took my novel out ;

And, Phil, by all the powers ! what do you think 'twas about ?

I had bought the thing in London, at least I went to the stand

Near the depot, and took the book that lay nearest to my hand —

A little American story ; the subject was very *rum* —

“Helen's Babies” I think the title — I tell you.  
I *laughed some*

Over the random purchase ; but as 'twas all I had to read,

I found, in the little urchins, friends in a time  
of need.

I wanted to get a look at my lady mother's guest ;  
But she sat with her face to the window, till

I thought I should not be blest,

When Ray dropped into a slumber, and sang  
such a tuneful lay,

That the girl's face, from the window, turned  
itself my way.

I don't think it's fair in a fellow to judge of  
looks on a train,

Besides, *la petite Sauvage* had been out in a  
pouring rain.

So all I can tell you is, that her eyes are large  
and gray.

That her hair is brown, and was tumbled down  
in a pretty sort of way ;

But upon this atom of girlhood I did not waste  
much time,

I was thinking of you, old fellow, and that soon  
we'd begin to climb

In earnest the grand Swiss mountains ; but, Phil,  
I pause to say,

Can't you get off from town, if only for a day ?

I want you to see my purchase ; I came here  
*incognito* ;

But my lady has found me out, and so from  
the inn I go  
To my old quarters at home. So come up, and  
bring some of the boys,  
Sir Guinn if you like, or Tom, or our jolly  
friend Joe LeRoys,  
And we'll talk our plans all over, and I will  
venture to say  
There will be nothing stupid during your little  
stay.  
Good-night, good-night, old fellow, now, is it  
not deuced queer,  
That, after all my planning, I find myself just  
here?

*LEIGHCROFT MANOR.*

I am more than sorry, my dear old Phil,  
To hear by post that you were ill;  
To know that you cannot, my dear old boy,  
Take part with me in the wonderful joy  
That Thursday evening holds in store. And I  
regret the forced delay  
That still keeps back the wished-for day  
Of our Switzerland journey. So haste and get  
well;  
And, in the meantime, I've much to tell.  
The fellows came up (five good and strong,

Guinn, Harry, LeRoys, Tom and Will Long).  
They, thank fortune, were only a day behind  
me here.

So, you see, old fellow, I'd little to fear  
From my lady mother's guest, who does not in  
the least advance

On acquaintance (she's a savage); and why they  
sent her to France

Is one of the unsolved problems. I don't see  
how ma has the face

To introduce *la belle Sauvage*; I think she's a  
perfect disgrace.

Her looks are all well enough, complexion, eyes,  
and hair;

In fact, I think she would be called by most men  
*débonnaire*.

But manners, Phil, she has none. I asked her,  
in casual way

(To open the conversation), how she came the  
other day?

I thought, perhaps, the pink cheeks might a trifle  
pinker grow,

At the seemingly innocent question; but, I would  
have you know,

She lifted her large eyes at me, and said, in  
a pert, brisk way, —

“*I?* oh, *you* do not know, do you? I came by  
*balloon* from Calais!”

My lord led her out to dinner, she did not seem  
honored at all;

She talked with the ease of a duchess; informed  
us “of her skill at ball.”

Said she “climbed trees, rode bare-back, played  
‘shinny’” (great heavens! what’s that?),

And another heathenish game called “cradle the  
cat.”

The butler was highly amused; and so — strange  
to say — was my lord;

And my lady looked slightly perplexed, and *I*  
was horridly bored.

After dinner we walked in the garden. I plucked  
a rose from a tree,

And presented it to *la Sauvage*, saying, “*Oublier  
je ne puis*;”

And what do you think came her answer — “I  
would not if I were you,

But a man that makes a fool of himself is nothing  
uncommon or new.”

And with this my gentle Savage took my proffered  
rose of peace,

While from *her* sweet society *I* quickly sought  
release.

The next day the boys came down; each I formally introduce,  
To each, in return, a dainty *nod* vouchsafes Miss  
Essie Bruce.

I think she "takes" with the boys; she's inclined  
to snare

A fellow into thinking, late nights, of gray eyes  
and brown hair,

So Guinn has told me, Phil, and he's known  
as a hardened sinner.

Tom is growing fond of croquet, and LeRoys  
forgets his dinner,

In order to drink in the music of Miss Essie  
Bruce's voice.

(Miss Essie talks *too much* for me, but every  
man to his choice.)

She has won my mother completely. Last night  
I happened to be

Out in the swinging hammock, the ladies were  
waiting for tea,

And I saw *la belle Sauvage* climb into my  
mother's chair,

And lay her head on her bosom (my lady's lips  
touched her hair),

And I heard her voice speak softly, saw her  
sweet eyes gentle grow,

Saw her red lips part in loving words (in words  
I could not know).

But the words brought tears to my lady's eyes,  
and brought kisses upon the face

Of the tiny creature in her arms (*for the time  
I'd have taken her place*).

Then Sir Charles calls her "his beauty," says,  
"when she goes away,

She will take all the sunshine with her for many  
a long, long day!"

The servants are her sworn allies; they laugh  
at her heathenish prank,

And still (*I can't understand it*), if Miss Essie  
held the rank,

In right, of a titled princess, they could show  
no more deference true

Than she seems to call forth from them when-  
ever her bidding they do.

But I'm off for a constitutional; and this even-  
ing, before I retire,

For your benefit, my invalid, I'll tune my feeble  
lyre.

No pun intended, old fellow (you know I'm  
renowned for the truth),

So, till evening, now I leave thee, O much loved  
friend of my youth!

## ESSIE TO HER PAPA

MY DEAR, DEAR PAPA, — If you could only be  
On this other side of the great wide sea,  
That divides, with its waters of greenish blue,  
Your own little Essie, your daughter, from you.  
I know we'd be happy and merry and gay ;  
For, dear, dear papa, 'tis a glorious day —  
A morning in June — not a cloud to be seen,  
The garden is fragrant, the meadows are green,  
And the river runs yonder — a silvery thread —  
And the choir of robins just over my head  
Are singing like “fury and all possessed”  
To me (and three birds in a horse-hair nest).  
Ah, if *ma tante* could be allowed from her  
grave to rise,  
I think she'd change her will, when with opened  
eyes,  
She saw how *much* of change had come o'er  
the orphan child ;  
What heaps of *savoir-vivre* had Mademoiselle  
Essie, the wild !





"My old maid Aunt."



“Speak well of the dead,” they say; I wish I  
could now, *but I can’t*,  
For I always did, from the very first, detest my  
old maid aunt.  
She called me “Esther” (through her nose), be-  
fore I hardly knew  
The very difference between my little glove and  
shoe.  
She always kept me “spick and span,” she read  
me books on “infant sin,”  
And once she whipped me when I yawned and  
said, “O Aunty, that’s too thin.”  
She punished me with Bible texts, and with the  
sweet commandments ten;  
And, oh, in church, if I forgot one single small  
“Amen,”  
A *word* in Litany or Creed, it was a sin of deep-  
est dye;  
And if I did not mend my way, I’d rue it by  
and by.  
She would not hear of fairy-tales — More and  
Edgeworth, goodey-good.  
Formed my stock of literature — were my only  
mental food.  
I’m glad our goat ate Hannah up; and I’ll con-  
fess right now,

That Miss Edgeworth fell a victim to Bess —  
our brindle cow.

Well, she asked me one fine evening (I had  
been unusually bad),

“Esther, I’d like to know what you would do  
if you had

No kind aunty to love you, and to care for  
you day by day?”

I said, “I’ll tell you, Aunty, I’d just be ‘gallus’  
and gay;

I’d play with Chick and the fellows, shinny and  
marbles and ball —

I’d go without shoes and stockings, I’d hang up  
my French doll

On the topmost limb of the highest tree, and  
then I’d tell some lies,

And then (to know what it felt like) I’d set up  
a shop of mud pies.”

That night she took a horrible cold, next morn-  
ing she made her will;

If I’d *cheesed* it about the lies (and the pies)  
she might be living still.

She left me all that she possessed — jewels,  
bonds, and land,

“To *me*, and mine forever,” she said. But this  
was her dying command,

“That if her niece should live sweet fourteen  
to be,

She must make a journey across the great wide  
sea,

And enter a school in France; there must Essie  
remain

Three long and studious years, ere she journey  
home again.”

And then she *gave us* old Guardy — “I do here  
provide

As guardian, Mr. Jenkins, a friend both true and  
tried.”

Papa, two years of the three have actually flown  
away,

And there remaineth, father mine, but one little  
year to stay.

I left my native land, papa, a very rough, rough  
stone;

And I greatly fear, papa, Essie has not polished  
grown;

Still, I jabber French like a native, and I play  
six music books through,

And I know how to walk, to dance, and to talk,  
and there’s the list, *Voilà tout*.

I’m afraid I have not forgotten old ways, which  
you will regret to see,

When I tell you I'm writing in pencil because  
I am up in a tree ;

Yes, not a *little* tree either ; but for comfort I'll  
hasten to say,

No one but the gardener knows it, the house-  
hold are all away.

My lady has gone with the vicar's wife to visit  
the village school ;

Sir Charles has gone to a neighboring squire's ;  
and the great big, stupid mule

They call their son McPherson (in a suit I'd  
blush to wear)

Is off with five boon companions pretending to  
hunt for *hare*.

I think I heard them say for *that*, but it may  
have been only *air* ;

But whatever it is, thank goodness, he's gone,  
and where, I don't know or care.

Tell Chick my romance was *squelched*, that the  
wonderful *vis-à-vis*

Was no other than Mr. Mac Langley — how dared  
he flirt with me ?

And then when we were presented, he asked  
me which way I came down ?

I said, "By balloon, Mr. Langley." Pa, you  
should have seen him frown.



"Because I am up in a tree."





But McPherson is rather good-looking — he has  
dark brown eyes and hair;  
But I know he likes fast horses, and I'm sure  
I heard him swear,  
Under his breath, at his valet, for forgetting  
some trifling thing.  
He's off for Switzerland next week; I'll be glad  
when he takes wing;  
But, before he goes, my lady is going to enhance  
My misery by giving me a little informal dance  
On Thursday night on the lawn; "informal!"  
listen, my dear,  
I want you to know the things they term in-  
formal here.  
The invitations are written on *crested* paper, and  
say,  
"It is Lady Langley's desire to make a pleasant  
day  
For her young friend, Miss Essie Bruce; will  
the Misses *Blank* prepare  
To meet Miss Bruce on Thursday next (if said  
Thursday shall prove fair)?"  
The guests are bidden to croquet, the guests  
are asked to dine  
With Miss Bruce and Lady Langley, if the  
weather shall prove fine.

Then my Lady Langley knows so well, young  
people do not scorn  
A dance at any season, that she shall have on  
the lawn  
A tent raised. There'll be music, and so the  
Misses Blank may  
Prepare to wander through the dance and while  
the evening hours away.  
I think I shall wear pink silk (I had it made  
on the sly —  
Gave the order to Worth on a paper slip when  
Guardy turned his eye).  
It's *snifty*, I tell you, pa, *princess*, train three  
yards long :  
Perhaps 'twill be rather *grand parure*, for I'm  
bound to get things wrong.  
I suppose the guests will come, each clad in a  
book-muslin dress,  
And behind their fans the dowagers will call  
my style "excess."  
We will see — I'll write and tell you, oh,  
heavens! what do I see?  
McPherson and his friends, papa, are coming  
toward this tree.

## McPHERSON'S LETTER CONTINUED

THE evening is gone, and the night has been  
reigning for several hours.

Everything that I know of's asleep; from the  
garden the fragrance of flowers

Is stealing in upon me; 'tis a fitting time to tell  
The rather strange adventure that to all of us  
befell.

Roys began it, I think; at all events, *la belle*  
Was the theme we dwelt on. (I shudder as I  
tell),

Not for what *was said* so much as what might  
have been.

Phil, 'twill be a lesson, not soon forgot by us  
men.

At all events, Roys began it, said, "Take it all  
in all,

One would not call Essie '*ugly*;' for his part,  
he liked small

Women, like *la belle Sauvage*; then, as to her  
ways, ah, well,

She was very, very slangy! but, had she not  
to dwell,

All her young life, in a country of blasted  
plebeian breed?

For his part, he thought Essie did very well  
indeed."

Tom said, "The little foot that peeped out in  
croquet

Was really enough in itself to charm one's  
heart away."

Guinn said, "her eyes had a trick of looking  
one through and through,

Till a fellow caught himself blushing, as boys  
are apt to do."

But we all agreed her a *hoyden*, regretted that  
lips so red

Should so often give expression to words left  
better unsaid.

We agreed that our English ladies would vote  
her horrid and loud;

And then we asked each other, collectively in  
a crowd,

Would we be willing to offer ourselves to her  
for life?

Would any of us fellows be willing to take as wife  
The object of our converse? "Twould be being  
cut off with a shilling,"

Said Guinn. "I could not ask her, even if I  
were willing."

Tom said they would be aghast; *his* relations,  
they'd raise a cry,

That made him say, at the thought, "He would  
not venture to try."

Roy's looked glum; he said, "An officer of our  
day,

And particularly a junior, had plenty to do with  
his pay."

Well, we all said something, and probably would  
have said more,

Had not something worse than loudest cannon's  
roar

Reached our startled ears. A voice (not "gentle,  
soft, and low,"

That excellent thing in woman the poet praises,  
you know)

Sounded high above our heads, a voice borne  
by the breeze,

A voice high up above us from among the  
garden trees,

Saying, "'Listeners never hear any good; ' your  
comments have done no harm,

For in all your land, not a single man pos-  
sesses a single charm

For '*la belle Sauvage*'! She *hates* John Bull,  
Hates his arrogant, lordly way, and so accepts  
this rather full  
Dose of disapprobation. Does Sir Guinn fancy  
his poky way  
Of lifting his eyes,—a consummate art,—or  
that polished flattery  
Can win the heart of a girl American born—  
of a girl who was reared to believe  
That true manhood knows not how to deceive?  
So, take the advice of Essie, each marry a flat-  
footed girl,  
Let each man fondly cherish as his, a native  
pearl;  
Wear her for aye on your bosoms and you will  
never repine;  
In conclusion, mind *your* business, and be sure  
*I* will mind *mine*.  
Now, if you'll kindly retire, I'll get down from  
this tree;  
For I've been up here all morning, and am  
tired as I can be."  
We left, Phil, without more ado, "*la belle*"  
had us all in disgrace;  
And we wonder how she will treat us when  
next we meet face to face.

## ESSIE TO HER BROTHER

DEAR CHICKEN, — The party is over. It was  
a most perfect success,  
And I only wish I had the power to faithfully express  
The impression it made upon me. To give you  
a slight idea  
Of how a social gathering is arranged and conducted here.  
My lady bade me “be ready to receive the  
guests at four;”  
So, just at five minutes of it, I knocked at  
her *boudoir* door.  
You should have seen her stare, Chick! I  
know she thought I looked well;  
But her English reserve and training would  
not let her tell.  
I changed my mind on the pink silk that day,  
up in *the tree*,  
And resolved to *out-do* England’s daughters in  
primness, if *that* could be.

At the very bottom of my trunk (hidden away  
in disgrace,  
From my puffed and furbelowed dresses) a  
white muslin had its place,  
Simple as hands could make it. This I resolved  
to wear ;  
I knew that this sudden change would cause  
a general stare.  
Well, on it went, this simple dress, with a ribbon  
belt at the waist,  
And at my neck and wrists I put a ruffle of  
soft lace.  
My hair I did "*la Marguerite*," and it hung  
like two coils of gold.  
Ah, Chick, I knew I looked pretty, without  
even being told.  
I took some half-blown rose-buds, and pinned  
them into my hair  
("Marshal Niels" are very becoming to one  
whose complexion is fair),  
And I did not put on a jewel, in ear, on finger,  
or breast ;  
Chick, in the code of simplicity I could have  
stood the test.  
My slippers were only *thirteens*, as *la belle*  
*Sauvage* has very small feet ;





"Marshal Niel's are very becoming."



And a small foot on English soil, to an Englishman's eyes, is a treat.

Well, we went into the drawing-room, and in very short time, my dear,

The guests that had been bidden — the guests from both far and near —

Were with us. *We don't introduce*, that is not the *en règle* way.

The unknown guests of my hostess are my true friends for the day.

Every one talks to every one; but, were you to meet on the morrow,

A bow to these very same fellows would be to your cost and sorrow.

The five *Adonises* were on hand, *Sweet McPherson* at their head.

I never saw men look so foolish, or turn so lobster red,

As they do when we meet. I think that affair of the tree

Was about as jolly a thing as ever happened to me.

They feel so cheap, you know, to think I heard their talk.

Just fancy me falling a victim to a stupid English gawk!

And, above all, McPherson Langley! My dear,  
a bigger bore  
Of a goose, and a silly donkey, I never saw  
before.

But I want to talk of the *party*—six girls,  
every one of them fair,

With the pinkest cheeks and the whitest teeth  
and the palest kind of brown hair.

Six fellows (five from our house), and to  
make the number right,

My lady had the kindness the young curate to  
invite.

We played croquet with a calmness that would  
make an angel fret.

I'm sure. "How could I stand it?" I just  
*hated* it, you bet.

I tossed the balls with a vengeance, I charged  
on the enemies' field,

Until *they* grew more earnest, and seemed less  
inclined to yield.

And then came the prosy dinner. McPherson  
escorted me;

And I made up my mind to bore him, to be  
*slangy* as I could be,

So I asked him by way of beginning, "if he  
had any money to spare?"

“If he had, would he *bet* I could not ride his colt, young ‘Golden Hair’?”

He had a spoonful of soup raised at the time to his lips.

He tried not to look astonished, and took three tiny sips,

Then gave up and said gruffly, “Miss Bruce, you never must *dare*,

As you value your soul and body, to mount that colt, ‘Golden Hair.’”

“Don’t *dare* me,” I answered bluntly, “or I’ll ride her in spite of you;

For, if I’m told I must *not*, *that* thing I most surely will *do*.”

He said, “Very well! as *I* pleased, but the colt was his, *he forbade*;

He should give *this command to his groom!*” and we were both of us mad.

And we never spoke another word. (McPherson *glowered*, I *planned*

How my Yankee wit could get of John Bull the upper hand.)

A heap of guests arrived at night, the lawn was a fairy hall,

With its tent and colored lanterns; of course *I* opened the ball.

You know what a ball is, Chick!—music and  
dance, that is all—

Flirtation and whispered twaddle is about the  
whole of a ball.

And we danced—the night wore on, and 'twas  
very, very late

Before the last guest's carriage-wheels left the  
manor gate.

Chick, *I have not gone to bed*: Chick, *I'm in my  
riding-dress*;

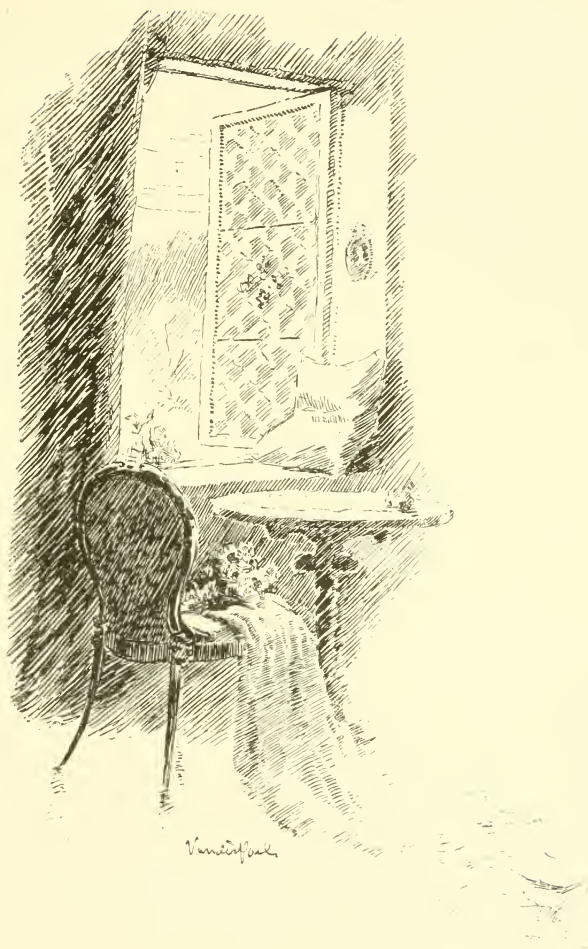
Do you know what I'm going to do? I bet,  
my brother, you guess.

Yes, he *dared* me not to ride; *he* to say to me,  
“*I command!*”

I have no right to his old horse; but, Charley,  
I won't stand

His saying what I shall do! Good-by! my last  
words may be said;

Who knows but vicious “Golden Hair” may  
bring home Essie, dead.



"Good-by! my last words may be said."





## McPHERSON TO HIS FRIEND

DEAR PHIL, — Three weeks have passed since  
your letter came to hand,  
And I'm sorry, dear old fellow, to have had to  
let it stand  
So long, without seeming reason for such a long  
delay;  
But when you hear my excuses, your wonder  
will pass away.  
I meant to write you next morning — to write  
to you of all  
That had occurred of interest the night before  
at the ball.  
But what man so often proposes a higher power  
will change,  
Disposing one's calculations in a way that seems  
most strange.  
It was late ere the party was over; yet we fel-  
lows lingered still —  
The smoke from our "*fior del fumus*" the de-  
serted tent did fill.

We laughed and talked of the ball, and somehow when we came  
To mention *la belle Sauvage*, we dwelt upon  
her name  
With a sort of tender accent: for, Phil, the  
little sprite  
Had (for some unknown reason) been charmingly gentle that night;  
Been gentle to all but *me*; and, like one that  
is possessed  
Of a devil, appeared Miss Essie, my lady mother's  
guest.  
She inspired a feeling of anger; and yet I'd a  
sense of fear,  
That this gray-eyed imp of girlhood was drawing very near  
Some dangerous experience. I led her out to  
dine —  
A penance, not a *pleasure*, yet, I could not well  
decline.  
I resolved to do the agreeable, *she* resolved the  
other thing —  
Result — all *my* good intentions in a moment's  
time took wing.  
Before the soup was over, Miss Bruce, with a  
jockey air,

Bet me — mark you — *bet* me, she could ride  
young “Golden Hair.”

I tried to keep down my horror, and (still more)  
my supreme *disgust*,

And that my replies were courteous I most  
sincerely trust.

I don't remember *what* I said. I only know it  
cast

An utter and perfect silence over our whole re-  
past.

Well, I thought of this all the evening, thought  
of it in the tent —

Thought of Miss Essie's flashing eyes, and won-  
dered if she meant

To defy my warnings; and I resolved to tell  
the groom

The earliest thing in the morning, that it would  
seal his doom

If ever he let a being, man or woman, young or  
fair,

Or ugly or old as Methuselah, mount upon  
“Golden Hair.”

(So I said not a word to the boys, who had  
by degrees slipt away;

We were all in the land of slumber before the  
dawn of day.)

I woke with a start, the village bell was calling  
out for seven ;  
I turned upon my pillow, resolving to sleep till  
eleven,  
When a thought of my purpose regarding young  
“Golden Hair,”  
Changed my plan ; I at once arose, and dressed  
me then and there ;  
I hurried down — the old house was wrapt in  
slumber yet,  
And I laughed to myself, Phil, thinking, “for  
*once* I’ll surely get  
The best of *la belle Sauvage* ; I’ll stop this one  
mad prank,  
Her neck shall not be broken, and she’ll have  
*me* to thank.”  
The stable door stood open, the horses were  
champing their hay ;  
I called out for the groom, Thomas, he came  
with “Aye, sir, aye.”  
I gave my command at once ; you should have  
seen the surprise  
That came over the face of the fellow ; you  
should have seen his eyes  
Grow large with utter amazement. “Why,  
Master, you don’t tell me so ;

Miss Essie rid off on 'Golden Hair' more  
than an hour ago.

She came and bade me side-saddle the mare, she  
said 'twas a bet'

That you had made atween you; that she was  
*afear'd* to set

On such a skittish young creetur as this 'ere  
'Golden Hair.'

I said all I could to dissuade her; but, Master,  
I did not dare

To say 'No' to such as Miss Essie; and, beside,  
I thought it your will.

I was *afear'd*, I tell you, and am a fearing  
still."

There was no time for parley. I bade him saddle  
"Jane,"

Asked which direction they took. "She went,  
sir, by hillside lane."

I wanted no more, but galloped away, my heart  
beating high with fear,

Dreading to look, dreading to think, of what  
might soon appear.

I galloped on; nothing in sight, all peaceful,  
calm, and fair,

No reckless Essie within view on more reckless  
"Golden Hair."

On I pressed, looked right and left, a curve in  
the road, a hill beyond;

At its foot, in the morning light, the waters of  
mill-brook pond

Glistened in the morning sun; then on my ear  
fell the din

Of the Eastern-bound train, to the town beyond  
coming in.

It turned a sharp curve on its way; on it  
came — God have mercy! — there,

With loosened rein, and laughing face, came  
Essie upon “Golden Hair,”

Riding along at leisurely pace; the memory of  
her young, sweet face,

As it looked in that moment of peril, Phil, has  
in my memory forever a place.

The beautiful, mettlesome little mare seemed  
pleased with the dainty burden she bore,

And turned her graceful neck to look at the  
face of her rider once more.

But the sharp, shrill whistle strikes on her ear,  
Her nostrils quiver, her eyes grow wild, and  
her body trembles in nervous fear;

Another, another shrill resound, till far-away  
echoes take up the sound —

One maddening plunge, one wild rebound,

And, like the morning wind, on rushes "Golden  
Hair."

I looked in speechless terror, wondering does  
she bear

Her rider yet, or has she flung her precious  
burden fair.

No; bravely holding to the reins, on Essie  
came.

I strained my lungs, I called the name  
Of horse and rider — "Whoa! whoa, 'Golden  
Hair'!"

"Keep tight hold, Essie, on that cursed mare!"  
She heard my voice. I thought that I could  
trace

A look of courage on the pinched white face;  
And back upon the breeze, Phil, this reply  
Was wafted to my ears, "Give in to 'Golden  
Hair,' *not I!*"

And, sure enough, friend Phil, the mare began  
to slack,

And, as she drew up beside me, Essie remarked,  
"Mr. Mac,

I am *sorry* I took your dare, — a runaway is  
not gay, —

Mr. Langley, if you've no objection, I think I  
shall faint away."

I had her down from "Golden Hair" in less  
time than I can speak ;  
She lay in my arms like a lily, so gentle and  
white and meek ;  
Her brown hair all tossed and tumbled, her  
bonnet gone (Heaven knows where) ;



But what woman wants a bonnet with such a  
wealth of hair?  
I bathed her white face from the brook, holding  
her on my breast,  
And I felt in this situation *particularly blessed* ;  
When the lovely gray eyes opened, and called  
me to earth again,  
By the pretty lips remarking, " I think I'll ride  
home on ' Jane ;'



I think I will, for my poor wrist aches like all possessed ;

And *you* can manage 'Golden Hair' a *little bit* the best."

Phil, since then she's been a lamb ; and now that the boys are away,

I suppose I must give up Switzerland, and just resolve to stay,

And do the agreeable to Essie, — her vacation is almost passed, —

And try to make her stay with us pleasant to the last.

In three weeks from now she leaves us, and then I'm coming to town.

I shall feel quite like a hero, worthy of much renown,

For having made myself a martyr to be kind to this little child

(Who is not so bad, after all, Phil, only a trifle wild).

Well, my letter ends : I'll be with you as soon as Miss B. goes away,

And, for the present, Sir Philip, I wish you a very good day.

## FROM ESSIE'S JOURNAL

WELL, little old Journal, my trusty friend,  
Do you know my visit has come to an end?  
And that I am back in the land I *adore* (?)  
Monsieur "Johnny Crapaud's" dear, native  
shore!

My visit is <sup>so</sup> over — my fair holiday,  
With the things that *were*, shall be put away  
Far in the past, that ever seems  
To grow bright and more fair in memory's  
dreams.

When I came that day from *that* horrible ride,  
I sort of and kind of *resolved* I'd decide  
Never to take a *dare* again (I nearly broke my  
neck that day,  
And, as a general practice, neck-breaking does  
not pay).

I resolved to utter fewer words in vulgar parlance called "slang;"  
But, if life depended on keeping *that* vow, I'm  
afraid I'd have to *hang*.

Oh! when the whistle blew that day, and  
    “Golden Hair” grew wild,  
Every wicked thing I’d ever done since I was  
    a little child,  
Came before me *in a flash*. I thought my  
    “bucket would kick,”  
And I wondered if I was *so bad*, that his ma-  
    jesty, “Old Nick,”  
Would catch me from wild “Golden Hair,”  
    and take me down to dwell  
With Eurydice and himself, in his brimstone  
    abode in — well,  
I won’t name the city — but I did not care  
    to go ;  
I did not like the prospect, I tell you, “not  
    for Joe!”  
Then there came to me this comfort—I weren’t  
    so *very bad*,  
And the Master, way up yonder, I remembered  
    that *He* had  
Known our sin and weakness, endured tempta-  
    tion too ;  
So I was sure He’d open the gate and let *my*  
    little soul through ;  
And in that sweet assurance my fears all  
    slipped away,

While my heart asked God "to take me," and  
my lips began to say —

"Now I lay me" — softly (as I do every  
night),

But while I looked to Providence, you bet *I*  
*held the reins tight!*

Then, lo! upon me dawned — now, Journal, who  
do you guess?

Why, Mr. McPherson Langley, in his knicker-  
bocker dress,

On his pretty mare called "Jane," with eager,  
anxious speed,

He was hastening toward me. I was glad to  
see him, indeed;

Somehow he was not so ugly, viewed by that  
morning light,

And I don't think that *man* ever was so fair  
to woman's sight.

Not Adonis unto Venus, not Æneas to the  
queen

Called "Dido," with her wild love, looked more  
beautiful, I ween.

He came from death to save me, ah! life is  
very sweet —

We never know its value till death's dark form  
we meet;

Till we see the arrow quiver, feel that the  
bended bow  
Is eager to drink our heart's blood, and lay our  
head so low ;  
But I would not have him *know it* — know *I*  
was glad he'd come ;  
So I rode toward him madly, with lips both  
white and dumb,  
Till I heard his voice ('twas music) cry, "Hold  
tight, Essie! Whoa, 'Golden Hair'!"  
(He might have cried, "Whoa, Emma!" for  
all *that mare* would care.)  
But "Hold tight, Essie," gave me courage, and  
I clung like all possessed.  
While my heart beat, *oh!* so loudly, against  
my frightened breast ;  
But I answered, in my weakness, that *I* did  
not mean to let go!  
And then ('twas a marvel) "Golden Hair"  
began to slow,  
And grew slower, and still slower, in her eager  
pace,  
Till Mr. Langley and Essie Bruce were actually  
face to face.  
Of course, like a *fool* I fainted; I was mad.  
be sure of that ;

So weak and *namby-pamby*, just like a regular  
“flat.”

And when I sort of “came to” (but before I  
had strength to rise

From a very romantic position, and too weak  
to open my eyes),

I could swear, *if it wasn't wicked*, that I heard  
as plain as day,

McPherson say, “*precious* darling!” in the most  
*smoodling* way.

He call “*la belle Sauvage*” “*precious*” — call  
Essie Bruce “*darling*” too!

I wonder the earth did not open, and offer to  
let me through.

And then, — well, Journal, — McPherson, who  
looks with infinite scorn

Upon girls, and *green me* above all, *kissed me*,  
as sure as you're born!

I suppose I should have been angry; I'm a little  
afraid I *was not*;

An hour before I'd have slapped his face, and  
looked as angry and hot

As a large, new-boiled lobster; but there I  
lay, pale and calm

As a lily on a May morning, with my head  
on his great big arm.

But I had to come to myself; I opened my eyes and said, —

“O Mr. Mac, you're tired; I'm sorry my poor head

Proved so weak a member; thanks for your kindly support.

I won't faint *again*, I assure you; it's not *very* pleasant sport.”

He said, “Thank Heaven it's over!” I replied, “Ah, yes, I survive;”

Then we never spoke another word for all the rest of the drive.

My lady never reproved me; and as for Sir Charles, he said,

“I was a trump;” he liked my pluck, so there was *nothing* to dread.

And then I spent three such weeks! McPherson seemed to change;

And from that morning *I liked him*; and, what is still more strange,

He gave up Switzerland's journey, and devoted himself to *me*.

What caused all this sudden changing, I can't for the life of me see.

The days of the three weeks flew on great, wide wings away,

And before I knew it, Journal, had come the  
parting day.

I got up very early, intending to visit the garden below,

To say good-by to the landscape I had learned  
to love and know.

Then I passed through the rustic garden gate,  
to the meadow, where the dew

Lingered on the green blades and "violet eyes"  
so blue;

And I wished (a very silly wish) that every  
drop was a tear

Of regret, from Nature's children, that Essie  
was leaving here.

I stooped to gather some blossoms to take as  
mementos sweet

Of the pleasant visit ended, when the sound of  
coming feet

Rustled in the grass behind me, and lo, and  
behold! there stood

My stalwart friend McPherson, and he looked  
"very good"

(As the Bible hath it). His strong, blond English  
face

Seemed full of feeling; and I'm sure that I  
could trace



A sadder tone in his full voice, as he said,  
    "I'm glad you're here!"  
"Yes? well, I came to say good-by to this  
    meadow, grown so dear  
To '*la belle Sauvage*,' your guest; I have spent  
    such happy hours



Out here among the clover and the nodding  
    blue-eyed flowers:  
And I'm glad *you* are here; I can say good-by  
    to you  
*In this meadow* very much better than at the  
    house I'll do.

Mr. McPherson Langley, if I've *ever* been hateful or rude  
(And I can be *both*, I know, if it happens to suit my mood),  
Won't you please forgive me? You know I'm a perfect child;  
And I'm motherless, Mr. Langley, and I've grown up ever so wild.  
When you first called me '*la belle Sauvage*,' I *hated* you with a will;  
But now I ask as a *favor*, that *you* will think of me still  
As '*la petite squaw*,' '*la belle Sauvage*,' as just wild little Essie Bruce,  
With whom, after many a squabble, you've raised a perpetual truce.  
And I hope and trust that some day we shall meet again;  
And be assured, whenever it is, you'll find that you retain  
My honest and true friendship: and I hope, sir, ere long to hear  
That you've found the lady of your heart, some one just as near  
Your idea of perfection as this earth can bestow;



"I left a kiss on his forehead."



But it's breakfast time — by-by, for *please* — sir,  
I *must go*."

He was bending over the rustic gate, his eyes  
looking into mine.

Mine that were brimming over with very salty  
brine

(Salty because I tasted one), and then — oh,  
Journal — don't tell,

For it's *awful* to act on *impulse*, but I *did*, and  
— and — well !

It was a motherly impulse, and he looked so  
*very* sad,

That 'I left a *kiss* on his forehead, and then  
took to my heels like "mad."

Journal, I never once looked back, I did not  
see Mac again ;

For to my lady's amazement he took the noon-  
day train

To London ; "important business called him at  
once to town."

Business ! *his business* ! I'll bet that nothing took  
him down

But to send on board the steamer *such* a basket  
of fruit and flowers

That I forgot to be seasick for actually several  
hours.

I'm back in the old dull routine, and I feel  
myself acting *queer*;  
I go dreaming and *mooning* about in a way I'd  
have scorned last year;  
Dreaming of great blond whiskers (that I used  
so much to despise),  
Of an English voice, and, above them all, of a  
pair of dark brown eyes.  
And I've actually *pressed* some flowers. *Guardy*  
says, "I'm growing refined."  
Perhaps I'm in (Heaven forbid it) — in love, or  
out of my mind.



## McPHERSON TO HIS FRIEND

DEAR PHILIP, — I've no need to tell you of  
Sir Hugh's death last week;  
The *Times* reported the sad event, so of that I  
won't stop to speak.  
Well, we obedient relations, like a party of  
black crows  
(Made me think of some scene from Dickens,  
in our sombre mourning clothes),  
Followed the old man's body to its last resting-  
place;  
And then I, seeing no reason to stay, turned  
my steps to retrace;  
For I saw no need of my going back to hear  
the will  
Of my maternal uncle, who never seemed to  
thrill  
With an overflow of affection; in fact, sad as  
it may be,  
Sir Hugh and I had never been known on one  
point to agree.

When a boy I was always treading on some of  
his gouty ways,  
And he did not seem to admire the course of  
my manhood days.  
Then there were hosts of cousins who had humored each caprice,  
So why did I want to hear what he'd left each nephew and niece?  
So I was rather astonished when my uncle's legal man  
Begged "I'd return to the castle" with the rest of the mourning clan.  
Indeed, he thought "I had *better*," so of course what else could I do?  
And we gathered in the parlor, looking as cold and blue  
As if from the bit of paper the lawyer held in his hand  
We were to be perpetually blessed or irrevocably damned.  
Ye gods! 'twas like a thunder-clap! Some legacies (very small)  
Were left to others — to *me*, Phil, was given *everything* — *all*!  
Titles, estates, rank, fortune, on this condition, my friend,



“ *That I should marry a wife,*” Phil, “ *before four weeks should end!*”

After the will had been read to my disappointed  
kin

(A will right and tight as a rivet), I tell you  
I felt *thin*

Over the stern proviso. Once I told my uncle  
that I

Had forsworn women forever, and a bachelor  
should die.

He never said pro or con, but hoarded it up in  
his head,

To make me eat with a relish my words after  
he was dead.

Only four weeks to choose a partner for my  
life —

Only four weeks to court a girl, and get her  
for a wife!

I could not keep the secret; and the girl I asked  
would know

That if she did not have me, I'd have to let  
all go.

And in the sweet by-and-by, when differences  
should be

Occasionally discussed between my chosen one  
and me,

She (after the manner of her sex) would not  
hesitate to tell

Me o'er again the story that I should know so  
well.

Tell me "I owed my title, my home, my wealth,  
my land,

To *her* wearing my ring on her finger, to *her*  
giving me her hand."

Then I thought over every woman known to  
me, high or low :

And to each "Shall I ask *her*?" my soul cried  
out loudly, "*No!*"

Did I say to *every* woman? There was *one*,  
with soft brown hair,

And wonderful star-like eyes that kept coming  
before me there ;

A little childish creature, with a saucy, *malicieux*  
face.

By Jove! Phil, there stood Essie! and *she* seemed  
to fill the place

Better than Lady Betty, better than Florence  
Byrne

Whose wealth is rumored fabulous (she's con-  
sidered a diamond mine

By fortune-hunting fellows), and she would  
give her hand

To one called Mr. Mac Langley, I've been  
given to understand.  
But what's her wealth to the bright eyes of  
a little girl I know?  
And what jewel does her casket hold that my  
darling can't bestow?  
What pearl so fine and priceless as the per-  
fect teeth that show  
Their whiteness in rare contrast to the red lips'  
ruby glow?  
What diamond in the wide world can sparkle  
like the wit  
Of the dashing little woman, when her lady-  
ship sees fit?  
I could string her into a chain of jewels worth  
far more  
Than ever mortal connoisseur had gazed upon  
before.  
Ah! I, who had hated all women, was suddenly  
brought to see  
That my only anguish now was, lest one  
woman cared not for me.  
I resolved to make the venture; and *if* I did  
not succeed,  
Why, I'd have to go in pell-mell and do the  
venturesome deed

Of blinding my eyes, and taking the first one  
that came to hand ;

So I gave my uncle's lawyer to thoroughly un-  
derstand

That I *accepted* the arrangement, and, without  
any further delay,

Would haste to ask the lady to speed the wed-  
ding-day.

I stopped at Leighcroft Manor to tell my  
parents the news ;

To tell them of the bride I sought, and ask  
them not to refuse

Their blessing if I won her. Imagine ! 'twas  
not a surprise.

My lady began to hug me, with tears in her  
dear old eyes,

To tell me, "she hoped *it would be*, she had  
learned to love Essie so,

And she did not think *her little girl* would say  
to *her big boy*, 'No !' "

My lord had to wipe his glasses, said, "all *he*  
had to say,

Was, when Little Sunshine came again, it would  
be a happy day."

So I crossed the Channel, feeling *most* mighty  
queer ;

Feeling queerer and queerer, the nearer I drew near.

First I went to the guardian; he looked like one perplexed,

As if he very much wondered what was coming next.

He said, "to tell me the truth, *he* had very little to say

On this, or any matter, Miss Bruce *would have her own way*;

And that if *he*, her guardian, pronounced himself content

With me, as Miss Bruce's lover, Dr. Bruce would give his consent."

So we went to the school together. Miss Bruce was summoned in;

I shall never forget the saucy nod, as though she cared not a *pin*

For her beloved guardian, still *far, far* less for *me*,

And had not quite decided *whom* we had come to see.

She nodded to her guardian, gave me her finger-tips,

But her pink cheeks grew pinker when I pressed them to my lips.

She snatched the white hand from me, saying,  
“Mr. Mac, do you know,  
Kissing *saints’* fingers, *not sinners’*, is in Paris  
‘all the go’?”

(Slangy little Essie!) I bent, lest Guardy  
should hear,

And whispered under my breath into her sea-  
shell ear,

“Kissing a sinner’s forehead seems in *England*  
*now* the style,

So why should not sinners’ fingers be kissed  
in France once in a while?”

Then Guardy found it convenient to take him-  
self away ;

And once alone, I hastened to say what I had  
to say.

I don’t know how I did. When I thought I  
had it to do,

I pondered over the puzzle, wondering how in  
the deuce I’d get through.

But, by George ! it was not so hard to say,  
“I love you, my dear !”

When the object of my affection was so very,  
very near ;

Not hard to tell my story, when Essie’s lovely  
eyes

Were looking kindly on me, in childish, pleased surprise.

She listened earnestly to me, a shadow on her sweet face

Of thought I had never seen before, adding new charm and grace.

Her head drooped low when I asked her "to be my own for life" —

Drooped lower still, when I called her "my precious little wife!"

Then I took her in my arms, and she raised her pretty head —

Phil, these were the very words that my betrothed said, —

"I've got *plenty of money*, so I don't marry you for that;

And as for your *new title* I care no more than a cat!

But you've *got to* marry *some one*, I very plainly see;

And I suppose, take it all in all, you'd do as well with me

As you would with Lady Flora (or lady anything),

For *this* I know, your lordship, there is not *one* could bring

In her dower the gift *I* carry; and, Mac, I'll  
tell you true,

I've *tried all my might to hate you*, but *I love*  
*you; yes, I do!*

Mac, I'll try to be better; but *you* must be  
better still,

And if you are, old fellow, I think we can  
climb the hill

Of life very well together; and when we are  
old and gray,

We may be glad we promised to be man and  
wife to-day.

I am glad my lady loves me; and Sir Charles  
is a darling, dear,

And I'd hug them both, I tell you, if they were  
only here."

But I was a jealous lover; I wanted the "hugs"  
myself.

Phil, I think *I* shall be slangy, when I get the  
pretty elf

For a positive, life-long companion. We marry  
in two weeks' time,

So, come on, old fellow, and hear our wedding-  
bells chime.

Essie is blithe as a bird. I've promised the  
child, next fall



If the gods are propitious, we will go and make  
a call

On the land of the "Star Spangled Banner." I  
wish you could hear Essie tell,

The surprise she expects to create, it would  
pay your hearing well.

She says they'll expect to see her, majestic,  
stately, and wise :

And when they find only *Essie* has come back,  
their surprise

Will exceed anything ever written, for she never  
means to be

Anything but "*la belle Sauvage*" to the whole  
wide world and me.

I'm happy : yes, so happy, that earth seems to  
hold no cloud ;

I'm satisfied beyond measure, and very, very  
proud

Of my blithe and bonny darling : and, Phil, how  
in the deuce

Could I ever think "*Squaw*" or "*Sauvage*" in  
the least like ESSIE BRUCE?

## FROM THE TIMES

AT the Legation, on Tuesday last, were married,  
McPherson Langley,  
Lord Crichton of Castle Wood, Thorn Hill, and  
River Way,  
To Esther Carlton Bruce, only daughter of Dr.  
Gates  
Bruce of New York City, in the United States  
Of America. The groom, Lord Crichton, stands  
High as a scholarly gentleman, and ever warmest  
praise commands.  
The bride, Miss Bruce, is beautiful, witty, accom-  
plished, refined;  
Beloved by all who know her for both charms  
of heart and mind.  
Owing to recent bereavement in the family of  
my lord,  
And Miss Bruce being motherless, the wedding  
occurred abroad;  
And was, we understand, a strictly private af-  
fair —

None but his lordship's parents and a friend or  
two being there.

We wish for my lord and lady all the blessings  
life can bestow;

May peace and joy be around them wherever  
their footsteps go.

















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